

Commissioner for Patents
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REMARKS

Claims 1-21 were pending in this application as of the Examiner's Office Action to which this Amendment is responsive. Claims 1-21 are rejected.

The below remarks are organized according to the section headings of the Examiner's Detailed Action of Jan. 5, 2005.

1. Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 112 ¶ 2

Claims 2-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 ¶ 2 as being indefinite.

Regarding claims 2 and 3, applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's interpretation of the transitional phrase "comprised of" as excluding additional elements. The phrase "comprised of" is well-known for effecting an "open" approach to claim construction that permits a claim to "read on" embodiments that may include elements additional to the claimed elements.

Adding additional elements to a claim limits its scope and is therefore an appropriate action to take in a dependent claim.

The phrase "further comprising" is used in example dependent claims in the MPEP. Applicants refer the Examiner to MPEP 608.01(n) I. A. ("Acceptable Multiple Dependent Claim Wording").

Regarding claims 4-6, the phrase "a propagation of" has been removed.

2. Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102(b)

Claims 1-3, 20 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) because of the following reference: S. Devadas, A. Ghosh, K. Keutzer, "An Observability-Based Code Coverage Metric for Functional Simulation," 1996 IEEE/ACM International Conference on Computer-Aided Design, pp418-425 (hereinafter, "the Devadas reference").

Regarding claim 1, applicants respectfully submit that nowhere in the Devadas reference is it discussed, or suggested, to include in a target tag value "an identifier of the assignment statement." Further, there is no discussion, or suggestion, in the Devadas reference to also include, in a target tag value, "an identifier of a first assignment statement temporally earlier than the assignment statement."

Since claims 2-3 depend upon claim 1, they are allowable for at least the same reasons. Further, applicants respectfully point out that their additional limitations must be considered in the claim as a whole.

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Claim 20 is a data processing system version of claim 1 and is therefore allowable for at least the same reasons.

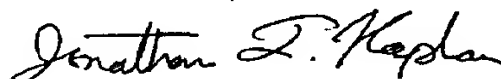
Claim 21 is a computer program product version of claim 1 and is therefore allowable for at least the same reasons.

3. Summary

Applicants respectfully submit that all rejections have been traversed and request a Notice of Allowance.

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office is hereby authorized to charge any fee deficiency, or credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 502584 referencing docket number 06816.0172.

Respectfully submitted,



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